AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as indicated hereafter (where underlining "_" denotes additions and strikethrough "-" denotes deletions).

Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) In a cable data delivery network for delivering digital data to a host location upon a subscriber initiated request, an apparatus for authenticating that the subscriber is authorized to use said network, said apparatus comprising:

a network manager including at least one database of authorized users and a validation agent, said validation agent further comprising:

logic to authorize the subscriber to access a first communications path by comparing first subscriber authentication information with at least part of the at least one database, the first communications path providing at least a portion of connectivity between the host location and a head end of the cable data delivery network; and

logic to authorize the subscriber to access a second communications path responsive to the first communications path authorization, by comparing second subscriber authentication information with at least part of the at least one database, the second communications path providing at least a portion of connectivity between the host location and the head end of the cable data delivery network.

2. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein one of said first and second subscriber authentication information includes a subscriber USERID.

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein one of said first and second subscriber authentication information further includes a subscriber password.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 3, wherein said at least one database includes an associated USERID and password for each of said authorized users.

5. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 4, wherein said validation agent authorizes said subscriber to use said first communications path in accordance with a comparison of said subscriber USERID and said subscriber password to USERIDS and passwords stored in said at least one database.

6. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 5, wherein said host location includes a dial up device that further includes a cable data receiver for receiving said digital data.

7. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein said dial up device is uniquely identified by an electronic identifying number, and wherein said second subscriber authentication information includes the electronic identifying number.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein said at least one database further includes authorized identifying numbers for each of a plurality of dial up devices including said dial up device.

9. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein said validation agent authorizes said dial up device to receive said digital data over the second communications path in accordance with a comparison of said identifying number of said call up device with said identifying numbers stored in said at least one database.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first communications path is a public switched telephone network (PSTN) link.

11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first communications path is bi-directional.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second communications path is a radio frequency (RF) cable link.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the second communications path is uni-directional.

14. (Previously Presented) A method of authorizing a subscriber to access a first communications path and a second communications path, the first communications path and the second communications path utilized in conveying data between a head end and the subscriber of a cable data network, the method comprising the steps of:

authorizing the subscriber to access the first communications path by comparing first subscriber authentication information with at least part of at least one database; and

authorizing the subscriber to access the second communications path responsive to the first communications path authorization by comparing second subscriber authentication information with at least part of the at least one database.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein one of the first and second subscriber authentication information comprises a USERID and a password.

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein one of the first and second subscriber authentication information comprises an electronic identifying number.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the first communications path is a public switched telephone network (PSTN) link.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the first communications path is bi-directional.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the second communications path is a radio frequency (RF) cable link.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the second communications path is uni-directional.

21. (Previously Presented) An apparatus utilized in authorizing a subscriber to access a cable data network at a first level of service and a second level of service, the cable data network providing connectivity between a head end and the subscriber, comprising:

logic configured to authorize the subscriber to access the cable data network at the first level of service by comparing first subscriber authentication information with at least part of at least one database; and

logic configured to authorize the subscriber to access the cable data network at the second level of service responsive to the first level of service authorization by comparing second subscriber authentication information with at least part of the at least one database.

22. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the first level of service is at a higher data rate than the second level of service.

23. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the first level of service operates over a bi-directional public switched telephone network (PSTN) link.

24. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the second level of service operates over a radio frequency (RF) cable link.

25. (Previously Presented) A method of authorizing a subscriber to access a cable data network at a first level of service and a second level of service, the cable data network providing connectivity between a head end and the subscriber, the method comprising the steps of:

authorizing the subscriber to access the cable data network at the first level of service by comparing first subscriber authentication information with at least part of at least one database; and

authorizing the subscriber to access the cable data network at the second level of service responsive to the first level of service authorization by comparing second subscriber authentication information with at least part of the at least one database.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the first level of service is at a higher data rate than the second level of service.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the first level of service operates over a bi-directional public switched telephone network (PSTN) link.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein the second level of service operates over a radio frequency (RF) cable link.

29. (Previously Presented) A method of claim logging into a cable data network that has a plurality of levels of service, the method comprising the steps of:

logging into the cable data network at a first level of service by sending first subscriber authentication information to at least one validation agent; and

logging into the cable data network at a second level of service responsive to logging into the network at a first level of service by sending second subscriber authentication information to at least one validation agent.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the first level of service is at a higher data rate than the second level of service.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the first level of service operates over a bi-directional public switched telephone network (PSTN) link.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 30, wherein the second level of service operates over a radio frequency (RF) cable link.

33. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the data delivery is restrained until authorization is completed.

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the first subscriber authentication information is a first type and the second subscriber authentication information is a second type.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the data conveyance is restrained until authorization is completed.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the first subscriber authentication information is a first type and the second subscriber authentication information is a second type.

37. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the data network access is restrained until authorization is completed.

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the first subscriber authentication information is a first type and the second subscriber authentication information is a second type.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the data network access is restrained until authorization is completed.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the first subscriber authentication information is a first type and the second subscriber authentication information is a second type.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the logging into the data network access is restrained until authorization is completed.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the first subscriber authentication information is a first type and the second subscriber authentication information is a second type.

43. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the electronic identifying number is a modem electronic serial number.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the subscriber of a cable data network uses a device which includes a cable data receiver for receiving said digital data, wherein said device is uniquely identified by an electronic serial number.

45. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the subscriber uses a device which includes a cable data receiver for receiving said digital data, wherein said device is uniquely identified by an electronic serial number.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, wherein the subscriber uses a device which includes a cable data receiver for receiving said digital data, wherein said device is uniquely identified by an electronic serial number.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the second subscriber authentication information is an electronic serial number.